

**MINUTES
OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
EDINA CITY COUNCIL
HELD AT CITY HALL
MARCH 27, 2008
7:00 P.M.**

ROLLCALL Answering rollcall were Members Bennett, Housh, Masica, Swenson and Mayor Hovland.

Mayor Hovland noted the purpose of the special meeting was to allow residents to comment on the proposed draft update of the Edina Comprehensive Plan. Following the hearing, he said there would be a forty-five day written public comment period. The Council was at the beginning of their work on the update to the Comprehensive Plan.

John Lonsbury, 6716 Southdale Road, Planning Commission Chair, used PowerPoint and presented the 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Dan Cornejo, Comprehensive Planning Consultant, Planning Director Teague and Assistant Manager Worthington offered clarifications and comments in response to questions of the Council.

Public Comment

Arrie Larsen Manti, President, Edina Chamber of Commerce, 7701 Normandale Road Suite 101, stated that the Chamber hoped the City continued to work with business in Edina. She referred to the three entities: the Edina School District, the City of Edina and Edina businesses that must work together. Ms. Manti said 51,000 persons come into Edina Monday through Friday to work with mostly a positive effect. Ms. Manti said the Edina Chamber and businesses thanked the Planning Commission and city staff for the hard work and expressed their hope to be able to continue the working relationship that makes Edina a premier place to work and live.

John Elliot, 5904 Lee Valley Road, stated his concerns over increased traffic that would result from an increase in density and added if his concerns were not listened to, he may have to move out of Edina.

Ronald Rich, 7008 West Shore Drive, stated he was having a problem with the projected increased density seeming incongruous with what appeared to be the small projected population increase. Mr. Rich said that tall towers do not represent Edina and something was not being planned correctly and was off track. He said he did not want high density in Edina and asked for an answer to why it was being projected.

Cassandra Mihalchick, 7227 Lewis Ridge Parkway, said she was the President of the Cahill Lewis Neighborhood Association with over 500 members. She stated the concerns of the Association regarding the proposed Draft Comp Plan. They included concern over increased density, potential high rises, and affordable housing. The Association would refute that adding more affordable housing or low income housing to our current mix outweigh the concrete negatives of the lower average tax base, more traffic and more pressure on the Edina infrastructure. She said that achieving Edina should be something to work towards and not automatically granted. The Association would oppose any density bonuses to developers building affordable housing. The Housing Section of the Plan was out of sync with the desires of the Edina citizens. They particularly objected to proposed plans for the Cahill Gardens.

Gene Persha, 6917 Cornelia Drive, said no sampling of Edina residents had been integrated into the plan and people do not want tall buildings in Southdale or Cahill. Height was the most contentious issue and important point of the plan. The landscape will be affected by what was done permanently. The Plan projected the wishes of the Comp Plan Task Force and Planning Commission, but not the residents. He said that the consultants and planners vision was what the Draft Plan contained and that the citizens were not represented by the drafters of the proposed plan.

Jerry Paar, 6201 Virginia Avenue South, said that he had attended the quadrant meeting held earlier and specifically asked about the Valley View and Wooddale Area. In the information provided that evening, the traffic was estimated to increase by 6,000 vehicles per day. Mr. Paar asked where increased traffic would come from and why affordable housing was proposed to be increased. He noted that the Met Council would not require the City to increase their affordable housing by over 500 units. He stated he thought the plan was untried and said he found it flawed to be told that the choice was between lower buildings that would use up the green space or taller buildings that would block out the sun and not allow green space.

Doug Mayo, 6041 Kellogg Avenue South, said he was Chair of Edina Housing Task Force that had drafted the Housing Succession Plan. Mr. Mayo clarified that the 500 units of increased housing in the proposed plan would include 288 units of life cycle housing (this was housing that will be purchased by families earning between \$47,000 and over \$90,000) and 212 units of affordable housing (for person with incomes at 60% of median income or less). He said the affordable housing would be similar to what is already in Edina, such as Yorkdale, Centennial Lake, South Haven and some other apartment. He suggested there was a need for family and life cycle housing in Edina.

Bill Griffith, representing TE Miller Development, 7900 Xerxes Avenue, Bloomington, offered compliments on the comprehensive public process being followed by the Council and staff during the Comprehensive Plan Update. He stated there were issues with the area around Southdale and the loss of development potential. He suggested the Council consider his March 24, 2008 letter stating a reduction in FAR would result in a down-zoning without compensation.

Ron Miller, 6921 York Avenue, owner of property at 7716 France Avenue, suggested that if the goal of the new plan was to see projects built with certain features, only a true density bonus system would work. He warned decrease in FAR would cause landowners to keep what they have or build all retail.

Susan Covnick, 4715 Golf Terrace, said she was disappointed by behavior she observed. Ms. Covnick stated Edina was unique because it does not want change that was constantly being attempted to be foisted on the citizens. She said people are upset, angry and disappointed because they do not want the proposed changes. Ms. Covnick said people were there because they loved Edina and did not want to change.

Vivian Talghader, 7504 Hyde Park Drive, asked if the Council was considering the plan in part or as a whole. If changes were made to the draft plan would public input be sought at that point. She also asked if the plan were adopted would the City be held accountable to the Plan and if neighbors directly affected by small area plans would be notified when the plans were under consideration.

Jane Westin, 6136 Brookview Avenue, noted the proposed draft plan only went out ten years, but needs to think further in the future and consider climate change. She suggested the plan must address energy efficiency by creative use of wind, solar and water energy production.

Al Kluesner, 6417 Colony Way, suggested that if most of the re-development over the next ten years would be occurring south of TH62 and east of Cahill, the City Council become more proactive in getting representation on boards and commissions from that area.

Maire Katyal, 5177 Abercrombie Drive, said she was a former designer and planner in the State of Texas. She asked that the stress on the schools by additional development be considered. Ms. Katyal added that she would prefer owner-occupied housing and was opposed to more rental housing in the Cahill area. She asked that one West 70th Street higher buildings be set back from homes for light and air.

Virginia Borgeson, 6216 Ewing Avenue South, said she understood the goal of the Updated Comprehensive Plan and stated residents did not want increased density. She objected to the Comprehensive Plan removing decision-making from the residents and giving it to the City Council. She said she objected to the plan satisfying the desires of the developers. She also objected to increasing mixed-use plans, and cited numerous pages in the draft plan to which she objected.

Linda George, 5145 Tifton Drive, stated she did not feel there was neighborhood input from her neighborhood in the Comp Plan. She said that the persons drafting the Comprehensive Plan understand the impact of the traffic on Brookview Heights. She suggested that individual notices should be sent to each household in Edina notifying them of the update to the Comprehensive Plan. She also objected to tall buildings and said they would have a negative impact on adjacent neighborhoods.

Sharon Ming, 1103 Coventry Place, said she was disturbed by comments about not wanting change. Edina has already changed many times from agrarian community to post-war suburb to the present. Ms. Ming stated change would come no matter what and she felt the proposed Comp Plan was an opportunity to embrace the change. She urged inclusion of affordable housing, encouraging diversity in age and economics as a way to maintain Edina's vitality.

John Bohan, 800 Coventry Place, noted that tugging and pulling were typical of planning. He said that several things have come out of the process. Using the graphic, he noted some changes that have been completed. Mr. Bohan suggested the promenade area be finalized, expressed concern over heights of buildings and suggested heights be limited to four stories until the study was completed.

Linda Presthus, 4521 Belvidere Lane, asked for clarification of the question of whether the City of Edina was bound by statute of any kind to add 212 affordable housing units between the years of 2011 and 2020.

Mark Chamberlain, 7004 Bristol Boulevard, agreed with Ms. Ming and suggested Edina should shape the future changes rather than react to them. He suggested the future be shaped with lower densities and lower height building. Higher density will lead to more traffic without increasing the infrastructure to the area that has already been saturated. He urged the restriction of building heights and density.

Michael Fischer, 4512 Dunham Drive, stated he was a member of the Planning Commission and Comp Plan Task Force. He said he lived south of Crosstown and east of Cahill, reminding people that the Comp Plan Task force was made up of Edina citizens. He clarified what was

proposed in the land use section of the plan relative to housing. The 212 units were affordable required by the Met Council, an additional 175 units were for people earning an average income of \$62,800 and 113 units for people earning an average of \$90,275. He said these would be made up of teachers, fire fighters and dental hygienists. Mr. Fischer said that Edina would not stop traffic growth because Edina was surrounded by growing communities peopled by commuters who have learned that Edina streets were better than the freeway system. He pointed out that the Edina Schools were bringing in 1,000 students annually because there were not enough students in Edina which pointed to a need for life cycle housing.

Peggy Buxton, 7500 Cahill Road, said she has been a 40 year resident and has seen a great deal of change. She said she lived on the first floor facing east of her property and said that a building even three stories would block the sun on her building. She suggested lower building heights.

John Snyder, 5705 Lois Lane, said that a registered sex offender lived close to his property. He asked about the low income units and who would move into them, expressing concern about the safety of his children. He asked the Council to explain why his fears were unfounded or if it was thought there was some merit in them, then why proceed and put the safety of young children at risk.

Member Masica made a motion, seconded by Member Housh to close the public hearing, noting the written record would remain open for 45 days.

Ayes: Bennett, Housh, Masica, Swenson, Hovland
Motion carried.

Mayor Hovland reviewed the questions asked by the citizens. The staff answered the questions and discussed the answers with the Council. Following the discussion Mr. Hughes suggested the forty-five day written comment period would remain open until May 12, 2008. The Council consensus for beginning their work on the draft plan following the comment period noting their first work session would be held at 5:00 p.m. on May 20, 2008, preceding the regular meeting.

There being no further business on the Council Agenda, Mayor Hovland declared the meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra A. Mangen, City Clerk